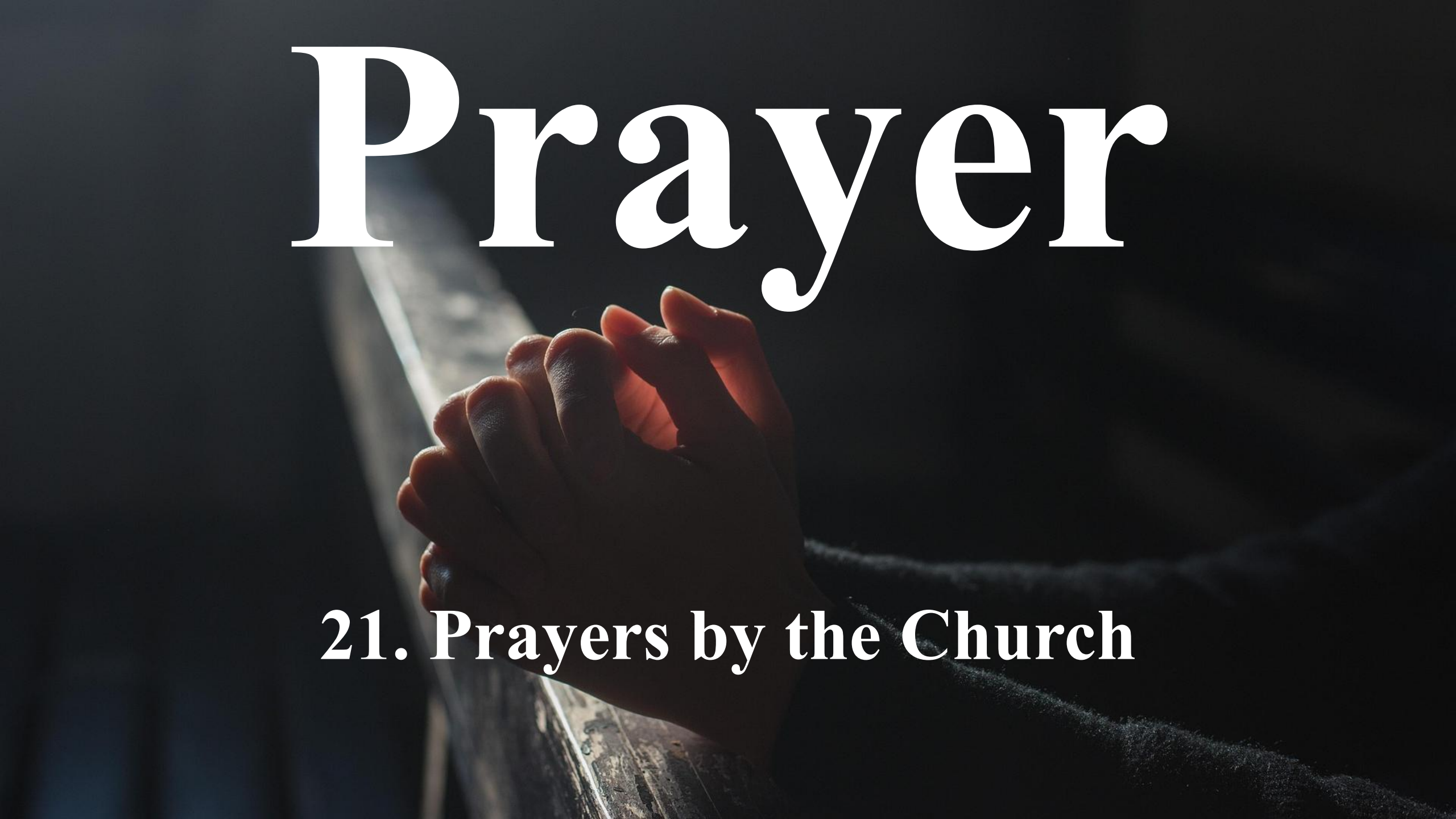


Prayer

A close-up photograph of a person's hands clasped together in a prayer position, resting on a dark, textured wooden surface. A bright beam of light enters from the left, illuminating the hands and creating a strong contrast with the dark background. The overall mood is solemn and spiritual.

21. Prayers by the Church

Acts 12:5 "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

Meaning: The story of Acts 12 is Peter in prison about to be murdered by King Herod. Many from the church of Jerusalem gathered at the house of Mary, John Mark's mother, to pray for his release. Because of the church praying, God sent an angel to the prison to escort Peter out of jail. Peter went to where they were praying and "declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of prison" (Acts 12:17).

Application: Great things happen when the church prays. Prior to Pentecost and 3,000 people being saved, there was a church praying in an upper room (Acts 1:14). Prior to bold preaching, personal soul winning, and sacrificial giving, there was a church prayer meeting (Acts 4:31-37). Prior to the ordination of the first deacons, the church prayed (Acts 6:6, 7). When the first missionaries were sent out, the church prayed (Acts 13:1-3). We underestimate the power of joint prayer through the members of a local church.

Other Verses for Study: Matthew 18:20; Luke 11:1-13;
Acts 12:1-19; I Thessalonians 5:25; II Thessalonians 3:1; James 5:14

1. What are two things that happened when the church prayed?

2. The church at Jerusalem prayed without _____ for Peter.

3. Can you remember when you last prayed with someone at church and who prayed with you? _____

"Oh the untold benefits that come to a church from the quiet prayerful members! Least known on earth but best known in Heaven."